



WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. OF L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

HEADQUARTERS

801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

No. 48.

CONTEMPT CASE STILL ON

Congressman Sulzer Testifies Before Justice Wright and Admits He Knew Boycott Was On When He Delivered Speech.

Washington, March 2--The contempt proceedings against President Gompers, Vice-President Mitchell and Secretary Morrison are again in progress. The last witness for the Federation officials was Congressman Sulzer. It will be remembered that after the injunction was issued against the American Federation of Labor in the now famous case, Congressman Sulzer made a speech in the house of representatives in which he incorporated an editorial from the American Federationist, containing a discussion of the controversy. Thirty thousand of these speeches were mailed to all sections of the country. The congressman in his testimony before Justice Wright admitted that he knew the boycott was on and also that a large number of copies of his speeches were franked. He was pressed for an explanation as to why he had made the speech on March 17, 1908, the day after the meeting of the executive council of the American Federation of Labor and the day before the protest conference of the labor officials. In answer Mr. Sulzer said, "I make speeches when the spirit moves me and I can get recognition from the speaker. This matter of the injunction I deemed to be of sufficient public moment to demand wide publicity. The Congressional Record being one of the cheapest agencies for publicity, I simply used that means of placing the subject before the citizens at large." In answer to questions from the attorneys as to how many copies were distributed, Congressman Sulzer replied: "I don't know for sure, but I only regret that there were not more sent out." The attorneys endeavored to bring out that the congressman had been asked by some official of the Federation to make the speech incorporating the editorial, but the congressman stated that he had been receiving the American Federationist regularly for many years and that he inserted the editorial in his speech on his own initiative. With the testimony of Congressman Sulzer the Federation case is closed, and after rebuttal by the prosecuting committee, arguments will be had before the full court.

DISCHARGED FOR WRECK

Washington, March 2--Robert K. Stuart, engineer, John H. Brainard, conductor and Henry Broecker, flagman, the train crew on the Illinois Central train that was wrecked at Kimmunity, Ill., in which prominent officials of the road and others were killed, have been discharged.

COTTON MILLS' REPORT

Washington, March 2--Pursuant to an act approved January 29, 1907, the secretary of commerce and labor was authorized to report upon the industrial, social, moral, educational and physical condition of women and child workers in the United States. A little over three years later a partial report was submitted and ordered to be printed, together with any additions which might be made. During 1911 the first volume of this report was gotten out and the remaining volumes are appearing at stated intervals, volume 15 just having been delivered by the public printer. The last volume mentioned contains a comparison of the price of the diet of twenty cotton mill families as against the price of the diet in the Atlanta, Ga., prison. Only nine of these tests show that the food expenditures reach the standard, or exceed that of the prison dietary, while eleven were lower. As this report is a stinging indictment against conditions prevailing in the southern cotton mills, Senator Overman of North Carolina became exercised and severely criticized the Bureau of Labor's report. He took emphatic issue in the matter of comparison of the bills of fare of the mill men of North Carolina and Georgia with the menus of the prisoners in the federal penitentiary at Atlanta, Ga. It can be said, however, that the Bureau of Labor, in making this investigating has fortified itself with abundant facts to substantiate its public report. An effort was to be attempted to have a senate committee make an investigation with the probable end in view of discrediting the Bureau of Labor's report. However, the officials of the Bureau of Labor state that they are ready to substantiate every statement made in the report and welcome a thorough and honest investigation of the report and stoutly maintain that every statement given publicity will be backed by positive proof. This report will be of inestimable value in bringing to the attention of the public the terrible conditions which exist in the cotton mills, not only in the south, but in the New England states. Aside from the low wages paid by these mills, it is shown that abnormally long hours are worked even by children of tender ages.

RAILROAD WRECKS

Washington, March 2--Recently six men were killed and seven injured when a locomotive, hauling an ore train at Bingham, Utah, left the track and rolled down hill. Three passengers were injured when a passenger train on the Cortland branch of the Lehigh Valley leaped over a thirty-foot embankment at Chittenango Falls, N.Y. In a head-on collision between an east bound freight and a west bound passenger train on the Baltimore & Ohio, near Rockwood, Pa., twenty-four people were injured, three seriously. Three people were killed and sixty-seven injured recently when the Pennsylvania limited #2, east bound, jumped the track at Warrior's Ridge, Pa., and nine of the eleven cars rolled down an embankment to the edge of the Juniata river. Three trainmen were recently injured in a wreck of a rigger train on the Western Maryland Railway at Seymour, Md.

GETS INCREASE AND AGREEMENT

Roanoke, March 2--It is reported that a conference between the federated crafts and the officials of the Virginian railroad resulted in a satisfactory agreement, and an increase in wages was secured for nearly all the crafts.

THE LAWRENCE STRIKE

Washington, March 2--From reports in the daily press and communications received at the office of the American Federation of Labor, the Lawrence strike presents a state of affairs which calls for condemnation of the state and city officials. The brutality that has been shown, together with the usurpation of the rights of the people, is deplorable and demands not only a searching investigation, but the application of severe penalties to those who assume to be greater than the law. Three resolutions have been introduced in congress seeking an investigation, and the president of the United States has instructed Attorney General Wickersham to ascertain whether the Federal law has been violated. Representative Butler Ames, who represents the district which includes Lawrence, is in that city making a personal investigation and it is reported that he has said that "These men and women cannot suffer much longer. They may be compelled to rise in armed revolt against the oppression, if the present state of affairs is allowed to continue." There are in Lawrence also agents of the department of commerce and labor watching developments. Pursuant to the resolutions introduced in the house, a hearing will be held before the rules committee Saturday, March 2.

ENGLAND'S IMPENDING COAL STRIKE

Washington, March 2--From information filtering into this country from England indications are that the strike of practically 1,000,000 coal miners will soon be inaugurated. Between 30,000 and 40,000 miners in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire have stopped work. Attempts on the part of Premier Asquith to arrange a satisfactory settlement has thus far proved futile. England faces a crisis, for, with the cessation of work on the part of this large body of men the consequent immense curtailment of the coal supply will undoubtedly cause a widespread closing down of factories and other concerns using large quantities of coal. There is also a prospect that many organizations in the transportation trades will make common cause with the coal miners.

CENTRAL LABOR UNION'S BANQUET

Washington, March 2--"I have done no wrong. I have violated no law of my country or of the District of Columbia. I exercised my rights as an American citizen - the rights of free speech and free spress. 'We will speak out; we will be heard, though all earth's systems crack; we will not take a single word, a single letter back.'" With the utterance of these words President Gompers received vociferous applause at the testimonial dinner given in his honor, and that of Frank Morrison, by the Central Labor Union of the District of Columbia at the New Ebbitt House recently. This is his answer to the contempt proceedings now in progress, which has become a famous case.

WORKS MAY CLOSE

Washington, March 2--Press dispatches say that the steel manufacturers of Glasgow, Scotland, have posted notices that all work will be suspended in their plants in the event that the coal miners go on strike. Ten thousand men are employed in the plants at Glasgow.

HARRIMAN STRIKE EFFECTIVE

Washington, March 2--From every section of affected territory news is coming in to the effect that the strike on the Harriman system is not a profitable one for the company. The following is a copy of a letter which was sent out and is self-explanatory: "Mr. D. E. Sullivan, Asst. Supt. Green River. Dear Sir:-In looking over the report of the last quarter of 1911 for expense of mechanical department at Evanston, I notice that it is very poor compared with that of the same quarter of 1910. I don't want to say that Evanston is the only point that makes a poor showing, as other points are away below, but I will say that Evanston is the lowest. No doubt, we are not fixed with the same kind of men at this time that we were a year ago, but I notice that we have 65 per cent more men at that point for the quarter than the same quarter of the previous year; comparing the two quarters I find that we got 84 per cent less work out of the shops at that point. I wish that you would take the matter up with Mr. White and see if we can do better in the future as we are being severely criticized from Mr. Scott's office in Chicago. Hoping that we do better in the next quarter, I remain, yours very truly, B. F. Fuller."

PLUMBERS GAIN CONCESSIONS

Washington, March 2--It is reported from Los Angeles that the plumbers of that city have been successful in materially changing conditions during the recent past. As a result of the activities of the members a great many employers have executed agreements, calling for the union shop, and not a shop has been lost to the union.

INCREASE FOR CIGARMAKERS

Washington, March 2--George E. Tuckett, cigar manufacturer of Hamilton, Ont., has voluntarily increased the wages of his cigarmakers from \$11 to \$12 a thousand on certain lines of cigars. The demand for union made cigars is stronger than ever in Ontario, with few idle men. It is said that the increase in wages was brought about by the heavy demand for union made goods. Information is also to the effect that the same firm is putting on 200 more men in London, Ontario.

CAULKERS ON STRIKE

San Francisco, March 2--Over 100 caulkers and shipwrights employed at the Union Iron Works, Moore and Scott Company, Schulze, Robertson and company's yards and the Pacific Mail docks are on strike for higher wages. The new scale being contended for is \$5.00 per day on repairing and \$4.00 on new work, the present scale being \$4.00 per day for all work except caulking, for which \$5.00 is paid. Two firms have acceded to the increase asked for prior to the strike, and the men are at work.

MUST RETURN REJECTED ALIENS

Washington, March 2--The steamship companies cannot evade the expense of returning rejected immigrants to their native shores, according to a decision just rendered by the United States Supreme Court in a case against the North German Lloyd Steamship Company.

BOOT AND SHOE WORKERS

London, March 2.--Although business has been good in the boot and shoe trade and there has been an increase of 3 7/10 per cent in the amount of wages paid, as compared with a month ago, there has been an increase of 3 2/10 per cent in the number of unemployed. A half yearly financial statement of the Boot and Shoe Operatives' Union has just been issued, and it states that the trade federation has decided, owing to demands upon the federation funds, to put into force the rule whereby double contributions must be paid by the affiliated societies, which would mean \$10,000 per year extra to be paid the federation from the funds of the Boot and Shoe Operatives' Union. The total funds of the union now amount to \$669,000 which is a gain in the past half year of \$23,000. The membership of the union is 32,928.

TRADE UNION FUNDS

London, March 2.--The disbursements which have been made during the past quarter by the General Federation of Trade Unions have amounted to \$53,000. The total income from all sources during the same period was \$48,000, showing a deficit on the quarter of \$5,000. W. A. Appleton, secretary, expresses the opinion that there is not any prospect of an immediate reduction of expenditure, owing to many places being involved in trouble. A large percentage of the labor disputes are due to victimization of trade union officials and trade unionists generally. It is also asserted that the admiralty has entered the lists against the forty-eight hour week.

ASKING INCREASE

Manchester, March 2.--There was a joint conference in this city recently between the central committee of the North and Northeast Lancashire Cotton Spinners and Manufacturers' Association, and representatives of the operatives, to consider the weavers' application for a five per cent advance in wages. Only a week previous the employers refused to consider the application. The application for an increase will now be submitted to the local Employers' Association.

MACHINISTS ARE REBUKED

Washington, March 2.--The machinists at the Watertown, N. Y., arsenal who protested to the War Department against the scientific shop management system being installed, have been rebuked by Brigadier-General Crozier, chief of the bureau of ordnance. In answer to their protest the brigadier-general censured them for passing over the commandant at the arsenal and informed them that the protest had been referred to that officer for his consideration.

TAILORS ORGANIZING

London, March 2.--An effort is being made by the Amalgamated Society of Tailors and Tailoresses to organize the ladies' tailors employed by the firms in Bayswater. At a large meeting held recently all those present joined the organization and took out cards of membership.

FOR HIGHER WAGES IN NAVY

Washington, March 2--Congressman Buchanan of Illinois, one of the labor group, and a member of the house labor committee, has introduced a bill raising the average rate of wages at the Washington navy yard, naval gun factory and the national proving grounds at Indian Head to \$4.00 per eight hour day. The bill applies to journeymen mechanics. The scale proposed runs from 46 cents per hour to 55 cents, not interfering with the present regulation as to leaves of absence or holidays.

REFUSES TO OCCUPY NON-UNION STAND

Washington, March 2--The Fresno Labor News is authority for the statement that Governor G. W. Hunt, recently inaugurated as chief executive of Arizona, refused to occupy a reviewing stand built by non-union labor. It further states that the governor, after he had subscribed to the oath of office, together with his party, retired to the capitol building to witness the parade, while a stand was being erected by union men, after which the stand was occupied by the governor.

BOGUS CIGARMAKERS' LABELS

Pittsburgh, March 2--Two cases involving the use of bogus cigar-makers' labels have been disposed of by the Criminal Court of Alleghany county. In one case the defendant pleaded guilty, paying the cost of prosecution and turning over 790 bogus labels. In the other case the verdict rendered by the jury was "not guilty". The bogus labels carry no serial numbers nor union stamp dates.

MAKING PROGRESS

Washington, March 2--The Cutting Die and Cutter Makers' Union is making splendid progress. A report has just been received that the Independent Die Company has acceded to the demand of the union for a forty-eight hour week. It will be remembered that a week or so ago a victory was achieved in New York and two or three other places in securing the shorter work week.

PLATER GIRLS' STRIKE SETTLED

Washington, March 2--The plater girls' strike which has been in progress for six weeks against the American Writing Paper Company has been adjusted and the girls have returned to work. The agreement reached was satisfactory to all concerned and a minimum wage established. This settlement foreshadows that organization in the paper mills will be continued with success.

MOLDERS' STRIKE SETTLED

Waterloo, Ia. March 2--After several months, the iron molders of this city have reached a satisfactory agreement and the strike called off. At the beginning of the strike there were 110 members involved and now at the close of the strike the organization has 200 members.

ANTHRACITE COAL MINERS

Washington, March 2--A committee, headed by President John S. White of the United Mine Workers, has just met representatives of the hard coal operators in New York. No definite information is available as to what transpired in the conference, aside from the presenting of coal miners' demands. It is learned, however, that the conference has been postponed until the week of March 4-9. From expressions of opinion given out there is some confidence displayed that the controversy will be amicably settled, although other reports are to the effect that the anthracite coal operators will not recede from the position which they have taken thus far to have the present conditions continued in the future.

TO PROTECT LABELS

Washington, March 2--Congressman Maher, one of the labor group, has introduced a bill, H. R. 20423, to protect the labels and other emblems of labor organizations in the District of Columbia and the territories. It provides for the filing of two counterparts or fac-similes with the librarian of congress, and any certificate of such record shall in all suits and prosecutions be sufficient proof of the adoption of such label. The penalties provided for violation is a fine not exceeding \$500, or imprisonment not exceeding twelve months, or both. It is further provided that the defendant, if found guilty, shall be required to pay to the complaining association or union all profits derived from wrongful manufacture, use, display or sale of labels not duly authorized.

KILLED AND INJURED IN WRECKS

Washington, March 2--According to Bulletin #41 just issued by the interstate commerce commission, it is reported that 201 persons were killed and 4,283 injured in train accidents during the months of July, August and September, 1911. This was a decrease of 120 killed and an increase of 391 injured, as compared with the corresponding quarter of 1910. Accidents of other kinds on railroads at grade crossings, on tracks, bridges, etc., bring the total number of casualties to 2,758 killed and 19,107 injured for the quarter, a decrease from the number in the corresponding period of the previous year. Ninety-eight persons were killed and 1,094 injured in the operation of interstate electric lines.

EXTENSION OF EIGHT-HOUR LAW

Washington, March 2--The fortification appropriation bill which passed the house of representatives on February 26, carried a provision that the manufacture of guns, caisson and powder must be manufactured under an eight-hour day. Slowly, but surely the eight-hour law is gradually extending in scope.

FAVORABLE TO ILLITERACY TEST

Washington, March 2--The house committee on immigration has voted to report out an immigration bill containing an illiteracy test. President Gompers appeared before the committee and presented the views of the American Federation of Labor on the immigration question and immediately thereafter action was taken as stated.

AGAINST INJUNCTIONS, TOO

Washington, March 2--The members of the Michigan railway commission recently appeared before a sub-committee of the senate judiciary committee in support of the Nelson bill, prohibiting the issuance by federal courts of injunctions restraining state officers from executing state laws. It seems that there are others, aside from the labor organizations, who protest against the abuse of the injunction by the Federal Courts.

CARPENTERS GET AGREEMENT

Hamilton, Ont., March 2--After several conferences between the building contractors and the carpenters an agreement has been reached whereby the men are to receive an eight-hour day, forty cents an hour, time and a half for overtime and double time for legal holidays. Last year a strike occurred in which the carpenters were involved, but this year, as noted above, an amicable agreement was reached.

URGE COREROOM INVESTIGATION

Washington, March 2--In the Massachusetts state legislature there is a bill pending, urging investigation of the coreroms of iron foundries where women are being employed. The International Pump Company, aside from other companies, is employing women in their foundries and there is intense feeling against permitting women to be employed in this character of work.

COMMERCIAL TELEGRAPHERS

Washington, March 2--The Commercial Telegraphers' Union of America is sending broadcast a set of resolutions in support of the public ownership of telegraph lines. It will be remembered that the postmaster general has recommended that the government purchase the telegraph lines and a bill has been introduced in congress to carry out that purpose.

TO ADD ANOTHER FOUNDRY

Washington, March 2--Bids have been received by the navy department for the construction of an additional foundry at the Washington navy yard. The amount of money available for the work is \$200,000.

BUTCHERS' STRIKE

Louisville, Ky.--March 2--The butchers and meat packers, to the number of 150, struck at the plant of the New Louisville Packing Company recently. Unfair treatment on the part of the company is said to be the cause.

TO BECOME WEEKLY

Washington, March 2--The Industrial Banner, formerly published monthly at London, Ont., announces that hereafter it will be published weekly.

MAY PUNISH STEEL MEN

New York, March 2--Preliminary proceedings, instituted by the government to obtain the punishment of those concerned in the destruction of a trunk full of documentary evidence intended to be used in the prosecution in the equity suit for the dissolution of the United States Steel Corporation at Trenton, N. J., have been begun before the federal grand jury here. The papers were destroyed last October and were used in the prosecution of the American Steel and Wire Company, and were surrendered by District Attorney Henry A. Wise to the general solicitor of the American Steel and Wire Company, it is alleged, on a written agreement that they were to be preserved and returned to the government when wanted.

AMERICA STANDS ALONE

Washington, March 2--Ex-Senator Charles Dick, in charge of a campaign to better the conditions of the civil service employees of this city, has issued a statement in which he claims that the United States stands alone in not caring for those who have given their lives to the public service in that the United States has no pension plan for its civil employees. He points out in particular that Belgium, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Egypt, British India and Japan all have pension laws in operation which protect the employees after a stipulated term of service.

VOCATIONAL BILL REPORTED

Washington, March 2--The senate agricultural committee has favorably reported the Page vocational bill, which provides for federal co-operation with the states in encouraging instruction in agriculture. The trades, industry and home economics in country schools, in preparing teachers for these vocations; courses in state colleges of agriculture and mechanics arts, in maintaining instruction in such subjects in state normal schools and in maintaining extension departments in state colleges of agriculture.

UNION LABEL HORSE GOODS

Washington, March 2--The Strecker Brothers' Company, Marietta, Ohio, wholesale manufacturers of harness and saddlery goods, have adopted the union stamp of the Brotherhood of Leather Workers. This is a notable victory for the organization, as it has been impossible in the past to purchase a full line of such goods at wholesale bearing the union label. This should appeal to those members of organized labor, as well as the farmers' unions, who are desirous of co-operating with organized labor.

SHORTER HOURS FOR CLERKS

Washington, March 2--Representative Jones of Washington has introduced a bill in the house providing that all postoffice clerks shall have one full day's rest during the week with pay, and none shall be required to work more than forty-eight hours in a single week, unless paid the regular overtime rate of thirty cents per hour.

COMMISSION PROPOSED

Washington, March 2.--The creation of a commission on industrial relations is contemplated in a joint resolution offered in the house of representatives by Congressman Wilson of Illinois. The purpose of the proposed commission is to investigate and report to congress within two years, concerning hygiene and sanitation in factories, wages in force in various parts of the country, the effect of long hours upon male, female and child labor; investigation of dangerous machinery where large numbers of employees work, and all other information bearing upon the industrial life of the United States. The resolution calls for the commission to have nine members, all of whom are to serve without compensation.

A VICTORY WON

London, March 2.--A victory has been won by the shipbuilding trades in the discharge note controversy. Discharge notes in shipyards are equivalent to what is called a "character" or "reference" in other classes of trade, and, as before noted in the news letter, provides the ship owners with an opportunity to follow men from shipyard to shipyard. At a conference between representatives of the Shipbuilding Employees' Federation and representatives of the organizations involved, held in Edinburgh, it was agreed that the present system be abolished, with a further provision that the representatives of both sides are to meet and work out a system that will be equitable to both employers and workmen.

DOCKERS' STRIKE ON THE CLYDE

London, March 2.--Efforts are being continued to bring about a settlement of the dockers' strike on the Clyde. Conferences have been held, but no agreement has been reached. The Transport Workers' Federation has taken up the battle and has declared that none of the ships on the Clyde, if sent to other ports, will be unloaded. At a meeting of Glasgow citizens a resolution was passed, protesting against the action of the Clyde shipowners attempting to lower conditions of employment of the dock laborers, and pledging support to the dockers in their justifiable struggle.

AN IRISH LOCKOUT

Dublin, March 2.--The lockout which took place in three Wexford foundries on August 26 last, still remains unsettled and 700 men and their families are still standing firm. The cause of the lockout was the joining of the Irish Transport Union of 17 of the men. Prior to the strike the skilled men in the foundries were receiving 11s to 15s per week, but the strike breakers which have been employed since, in an effort to break the strike, are being paid 30s to 35s a week.

ANOTHER STRIKE SETTLED

London, March 2.--After being on strike for two months for an advance of 2s a week the Sheet Metal Workers in the Ashton-under-Lyne district have reached an agreement and returned to work.